

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15
/064 W

-----190843Z 112248 /13

R 180937Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8917
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL BELFAST

UNCLAS DUBLIN 0598

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, EI
SUBJECT: PRESS REACTIONS TO IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S U.S. VISIT.

1. MEDIA COVERAGE OF FOREIGN MINISTER FITZGERALD'S VISIT TO THE US HAS BEEN VERY HEAVY AND UNIFORMLY FAVORABLE. FITZGERALD HIMSELF HAS BEEN GIVING A RUNNING SERIES OF TELEPHONE INTER-VIEWS TO THE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO/TELEVISION. FITZGERALD AND THUS THE MEDIA HAVE STRESSED THAT THE GOI HAS QUOTE WON THE SUPPORT OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE FLOW OF FUNDS AND OTHER SUPPORT FROM IRISH AMERICANS TO THE PROVISIONAL IRA. UNQUOTE. HE EXPRESSED HIS DEEP APPRECIATION FOR HIS CORDIAL RECEPTION BY THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE WITH THE SECRETARY WAS PARTICULARLY APPRECIATED, ACCORDING TO MEDIA HERE.

2. AS REPORTED BY THE IRISH MEDIA THE BULK OF THE DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT CARTER CENTERED ON THE NORTH, AND FITZGERALD SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD SHOWN HIMSELF QUOTE VERY SENSITIVE UNQUOTE AND QUOTE WELL BRIEFED UNQUOTE ON THE RANGE OF ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION.

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3. IN HIS MEETINGS WITH US OFFICIALS AND IN HIS GEORGETOWN ADDRESS FITZGERALD HAS APPARENTLY BEEN EMPHASIZING THAT QUOTE THE RENEWED COMMITMENT OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO POWER SHARING UNQUOTE PRESENTS QUOTE SOME HOPE OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. UNQUOTE

4. THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY MESSAGE BY SENATORS KENNEDY

AND MOYNIHAN, SPEAKER O'NEIL, AND GOVERNOR CAREY DEPLORING VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND APPEALING TO AMERICANS TO RENOUNCE ANY ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT VIOLENCE HAS RECEIVED EQUAL IF NOT SLIGHTLY MORE PROMINENT COVERAGE THAN FITZGERALD'S MEETINGS.

5. IN AN EDITORIAL MARCH 18 THE IRISH TIMES COMMENTED: QUOTE IRISH AMERICANS HAVE HAD PAINFUL LESSONS TO LEARN IN THESE LAST FEW MELANCHOLY YEARS; AND IF THEY HAVE BEEN SLOW TO LEARN THEM, SO TOO HAVE THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND, NORTH AND SOUTH, AND OF BRITAIN. IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY TO OVERCOME THE WEIGHT OF MUCH HISTORY, TO SUPPRESS EMOTIONALISM, TO SPURN OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE LOCAL POLITICAL CAPITAL OUT OF THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND - OPPORTUNITIES STILL EAGERLY GRASPED BY TOO MANY AMERICAN POLITICIANS. BUT WHEN THEIR OWN MOST RESPECTED LEADERS ADD THEIR VOICES SO FIRMLY TO THOSE OF THE IRISH AND UNITED STATES GOVERNMENTS AND OF THE SDLP, IT IS AT LEAST REASONABLE TO HOPE THAT THIS MAY MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF MURDER AND DESTRUCTION.

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF STOPPING AMERICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN AID FOR THE PROVISIONALS. DISCREDITED AND REJECTED AT HOME, THEY HAVE DERIVED POLITICAL AS WELL AS MATERIAL COMFORT FROM THE ASSISTANCE THEY HAVE RECEIVED FROM MISGUIDED PEOPLE ABROAD. IF THEIR LEADERS HAVE ANY CAPACITY FOR POLITICAL JUDGEMENT THEY MIGHT PONDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS LATEST UNCLASSIFIED

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REJECTION IN AN AREA ON WHICH THEY HAVE DEPENDED SO HEAVILY - AND CALL OFF THEIR CAMPAIGN BEFORE THE DENIAL OF ARMS AND MONEY FORCES THEM TO DO SO." CURLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, COMMUNIQUEs
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DUBLIN00598
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770094-0831
Format: TEL
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770347/aaaabocx.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3069810
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REACTIONS TO IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S U.S. VISIT.
TAGS: PFOR, EI, US, (FITZGERALD, GARRET)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b50feeb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009